



Campus Work Group

11-17-2008

Introduction

The Baltimore metro areas is home to more than 17 colleges and universities, including 2 teaching hospitals, 14 of which are located within City limits. Collectively, Baltimore's "Eds and Meds" constitute our largest employers, largest land-owners, largest developers and greatest attraction for new short- and long-term residents. A new zoning ordinance should help streamline the development process for campuses yet involve surrounding communities so that the impact of campus development is synergistic with their needs. In some cases, campus expansion can help revitalize distressed areas; in others, a well-established community is looking for more compatibility with their large neighbors.

TransForm Baltimore offers a unique opportunity to tailor land use regulations to address the unique needs of Baltimore's colleges and universities as well as the communities that surround them. The Campus Planning and Development Work Group will explore the current zoning code, its impact on campus development, and make recommendations for the new code. The work group's discussions have been framed around four key questions: (1) what is this topic; (2) how do current approaches impact development; (3) what issues with the current approach should TransForm Baltimore help address; and (4) what proposed approaches should be considered during the TransForm Baltimore process?

What is this topic?

From Baltimore City's Comprehensive Master Plan:

"Universities and hospitals tend to be large land owners with complex, interrelated buildings and functions that districts need to be created to manage, zone and develop them. The Zoning Code should provide a tool for adoption of the campus and hospital master plans. A district master plan directs expansion so that property owners can continue to invest in the area with some assurance of stability. This can trade flexibility in uses, design, parking and review process with comprehensive planning with public input. The communities surrounding these areas and institutions provide a unique opportunity for housing and retail support for the area and the surrounding neighborhoods. This category should support the mix of use (biotechnology companies, medical offices, educational institutions, retail, and housing) that can support both the institutions and neighborhoods. This district will be different from the other mixed use categories based on the use mix, and the general purpose statements that will guide development in this district".

How do current approaches impact development?



- Most campus areas are currently zoned residential or are partially within a residential Planned Unit Development (PUD).
- Several are within Urban Renewal Plans (URP) which have “Educational/University Districts” identified
- The development procedures the City has in place (i.e. PUD and current Zoning) work well for the Universities. They would be in favor of some streamlining and clarity at the onset of a project for own planning and cost savings.
- Implementation of the City’s plans/processes often impact the functions within campuses (i.e. time lines for developers’ agreements, street closings, infrastructure/utility improvements, etc).
- **Several development review processes impact Universities**
 - Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC)
 - New Developments/buildings Subdivisions;
 - Multiple Structures on one lot;
 - Multi family/ loft developments;
 - Condo projects;
 - Projects in 100 year flood plain;
 - Renovations/additions larger than 600 GSF;
 - Development with lot larger than 1 acre; and
 - Use having drive-up/drive-thru and walk-up facilities.
 - Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals:
 - Set back Variance;
 - Coverage Variance;
 - Parking Variance; and
 - Conditional Uses.
 - City Council & Planning Commission Approvals:
 - Zoning Changes;
 - Street and alley closing & openings;
 - Subdivisions (with or without Development plan);
 - Final Design approvals (Two Structures in one lot);
 - Public Easements (Perpetual/Fee);
 - Planned Unit Developments (PUD); and
 - Master Plans.
 - Urban Design & Architectural Design Review Panel (UDARP) Approvals
 - Urban Design Architectural Reviews and approvals are required for new developments and & rehabilitation projects outside Downtown area, and also for public buildings, planned unit developments and housing for the elderly, to assure a high standard of design.
 - Forest Conservation Review & Approval
 - Developments that would disturb more than 20,000 sf of area are subject to forest conservation requirements.

What issues with the current approach should TransForm Baltimore help address?

- Objectives
 - Transparency for all stakeholders in the process



- Streamlined process
- Negotiated agreement to anticipate and mitigate impacts
- Zoning should address the impact on the neighborhood (both positive and negative)
- There should be clarity with respect to what can and cannot be enforced through zoning
- The legal definition of “campus” needs to be addressed. Each institution has its own unique campus environment and definition of that word. Is there a way that all aspects are covered under an umbrella term, or should they be called out separately? (i.e. contiguous campus, urban campus, adjacent/ annex/ parcel, medical, etc.)
- Public/Private Partnerships is becoming a more attractive development option for universities. The ground lease parcels are subject to local zoning
- Privatized student housing needs to fit into the context of surrounding neighborhoods
- Stricter parking requirements need to be in place to prevent students and employees from avoiding the parking fee on campus by parking in the neighborhood; or is there a way to include the parking/transit fee into student fees up front, so that students use transit/on-campus parking.
- Universities would like to see more certainty to the process/ clarity (i.e. hard lines for when State properties are exempted/ public-private developments/ timeline)
- The definition for “multifamily dwelling” needs to be defined and possibly coordinated with surrounding jurisdictions. Many concerns come from the transformation of single family dwellings into fraternity/sorority houses and multi units. The City allows up to 4 unrelated persons to live together whereas the counties allow only up to 2. How are sororities/fraternities defined in the City vs. counties?
- Around medical centers, adjacent land uses should allow persons receiving care to transition from acute medical interventions to ongoing care (i.e. substance abuse centers should be able to locate near medical institutions).

What proposed approaches should be considered during the TransForm Baltimore process?

- Create a specific designation in the Zoning Code that meets the needs of campuses and protects (or in some cases helps revitalize) surrounding communities.
- Take a look at Philadelphia, where they have what’s called an Institutional Development District (IDD). The campuses of Penn, Temple, Drexel and the other schools fall into this category. The IDD zone has specifications tailored to the needs of university development, like no height requirements, exemptions to FAR for university-specific architectural elements like belfries and towers, and limited commercial uses compatible with a university setting (bike shops, delis, drycleaners, etc) that are clearly enumerated but not permitted by right. The code also speaks to this issue of creating new university zones. It mandates the development of an enforceable plan and leaves room for community review.
- How do State institutions fit in with these as they are exempt? Would they be in favor of a university overlay that would regulate them?



- State institutions are required to create master plans in 5-year cycles
- Should/could there be a mandatory community approval process?
- Is there a way to designate areas that buffer campuses in order to protect uses in surrounding residential areas?
- How can zoning ordinances/variances work in tandem with community agreements? (i.e. setback/ coverage/ parking requirements)